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C O N F I D E N T I A L DHAKA 003141

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TAGS: [PTER](#) [PREL](#) [PGOV](#) [BG](#)
SUBJECT: JAMMAT-ISLAMI BANGLADESH DENY INVOLVEMENT IN
ATTACK ON SHEIKH HASINA

CLASSIFIED BY: AMBASSADOR HARRY K. THOMAS, REASONS 1.4 (B)(D)

¶1. (C) On September 12, Ambassador met with Jammata-Islami Bangladesh (JMB) Assistant General Secretary Abdul Razzack and advisor Shah Abdul Hannan. Both stressed that the JMB (a partner in the ruling coalition) did not participate in the August 21 attack on the opposition Awami League and argued that the BDG was doing everything possible to solve the crime. They said that while the JMB did not believe that India was responsible for the attacks, they are concerned that Indian leaders and journalists are making saber rattling statements about pre-emptive strikes against Bangladesh in an attempt to intimidate the government. Hannan alleged that India's Research and Analysis Wing (RAW) is conducting a smear campaign aimed at linking the JMB to the attack in the public's mind. India's goal aim is to destabilize the BDG and bring Sheikh Hasina to power, they asserted.

¶2. (C) Ambassador responded that the USG welcomed assurances that the JMB was not involved in this attack and said the best way to silence critics is to solve the crime. Ambassador added that the failure to solve the recent arms hauls or bombings in Sylhet continue to give credence to charges that the BDG is covering up crimes and that extremist elements are involved. Ambassador then expressed USG concern with the violent activities of the Shabir (JMB student wing) and stressed that the Shabir has to participate in the democratic process without violence. Hannan initially stated that the Shabir is only responding to attacks against it by the BNP and Awami League student wings but Razzack admitted that the Shabir has sometimes been involved in "excess acts" but that they have been told to halt all violent actions. Razzack indicated that the JMB has counseled the Shabir to halt violent activities against the minority Ahmadiyyas. He then invited the Ambassador to have dinner with the Shabir leaders.

¶3. (C) Comment: We are looking forward to taking the Shabir's measure but remain concerned about its violent predilections. The JMB, clearly stung by charges that it is responsible for the August 21 attacks, is working to assure the USG that it remains committed to democracy and non-violence but many of its younger members appear to support violent behavior and are opposed to western values. We will keep a close watch.

THOMAS